

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 AID-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OPR-02 SY-05

ARAE-00 /063 W

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O 302013Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8468

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1. SUMMARY - GOES SECURITY SERVICES HAVE CONFIRMED TO EMBASSY THAT FRANCISCO "CHICO" DE SOLA, LEADING MEMBER OF ONE OF EL SALVADOR'S "FOURTEEN FAMILIES" WAS KIDNAPPED WHILE ON HIS WAY TO WORK EARLY THIS MORNING (JUNE 30). THE ONLY FULLY CONFIRMED FACT IS OF KIDNAPPING ITSELF. DETAILS OF HIS CAPTURE ARE SPARSE AND SOMEWHAT CONFLICTING. THERE IS YET NO INFORMATION AS TO WHO THE KIDNAPPERS ARE, OR WHAT DEMANDS THEY MIGHT HAVE. END SUMMARY.

2. FRANCISCO DE SOLA, 66 YEARS OLD, ACTIVELY HEADS A FAMILY COFFEE AND INDUSTRIAL EMPIRE FOUNDED BY HIS FATHER. BESIDES GUIDING THE FAMILY FORTUNES, DE SOLA IS EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN BUSINESS, SOCIAL AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS, AMONG WHICH HE IS PRESIDENT OF SALVADORAN ASSOCIATION OF INDUSTRIALISTS (ASI), VICE PRESIDENT OF FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING (VIVIENDA MINIMA), AND AN OFFICER OF THE REGISTERED CATTLE RAISERS ASSOCIATION. HE IS ONE OF THE TWO OR THREE BEST KNOWN AND MOST ACTIVE MEMBERS OF THE SALVADORAN "OLIGARCHY."

3. FEW DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE CAPTURE ITSELF. DE SOLA WAS APPARENTLY ON HIS WAY TO WORK WHEN AT LEAST ONE VEHICLE RAMMED HIS CAR. AN UNKNOWN NUMBER (ONE REPORT SAID SEVERAL) OF ASSAILANTS, SOME APPARENTLY WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS,

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SURROUNDED THE DE SOLA CAR. ONE VERSION SAYS HIS BODYGUARD

WAS SHOT, ANOTHER THAT NO SHOTS WERE FIRED.

4. AS RECENTLY AS EARLIER THIS YEAR, DE SOLA HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY WERE THE RECIPIENTS OF AN EXTORTION THREAT AND DEMAND FOR MONEY. AT THAT TIME DE SOLA'S WIFE (US CITIZEN LEONORA NEE HEBARD, OF WHITE PLAINS, NEW YORK) MENTIONED THE EXTORTION ATTEMPT TO THE AMBASSADOR. THE AMBASSADOR MET WITH MR. DE SOLA AT HIS REQUEST AND GAVE HIM COPY OF DEPARTMENT'S PRESCRIBED INFORMATION ON PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE TO MINIMIZE KIDNAP POSSIBILITIES. ALTHOUGH DE SOLA DID NOT PLAN TO COMPLY WITH THE RANSOM DEMANDS OF THE EXTORTIONISTS, HE DID ATTEMPT TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS HE HAD RECEIVED TO LOCATE THE SITE WITHOUT TAKING THE RANSOM MONEY. HOWEVER, HE WAS UNABLE TO FIND THE SPECIFIED LOCATION.

5. COMMENT: WHATEVER THE MOTIVES OF THE KIDNAPPERS, WHETHER POLITICAL OR CRIMINAL, THE KIDNAPPING OF SUCH A PROMINENT SYMBOL OF THE "FOURTEEN" CANNOT HELP BUT SEND A WAVE OF FEAR THROUGH THE OLIGARCHY, AS OCCURRED FOUR YEARS AGO WHEN THE SCION OF ANOTHER "FOURTEEN" FAMILY, ERNESTO REGALADO DUENAS, WAS KIDNAPPED AND MURDERED. THE FULL STORY OF THAT EVENT IS STILL NOT KNOWN, DESPITE A RECENT COURT TRIAL, BUT THE REGALADO DUENAS CASE SENT SHOCK WAVES THROUGH THE OLIGARCHY. WHETHER PROVOKED BY POLITICAL OR PURELY CRIMINAL MOTIVES, THIS KIDNAPPING WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY HAVE POLITICAL FALLOUT. COMING JUST BEFORE THE FIRST CANDIDATES ARE TO ARRIVE FOR THE MISS UNIVERSE CONTEST, AND WORLDWIDE ATTENTION FOCUSES ON EL SALVADOR, THE GOES WILL LIKELY PERCEIVE THIS AS A POLITICAL ATTEMPT TO EMBARRASS THE REGIME. SIMILARLY, JUXTAPOSITION OF THIS ACT WITH LAST WEEK'S ASSEMBLY PASSAGE OF THE NEW AGRARIAN TRANSFORMATION BILL, WHICH IS ALSO SEEN AS A "THREAT" BY THE OLIGARCHY, WILL OBVIOUSLY INCREASE THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF THE KIDNAPPING. CAMPBELL

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